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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

MAN SENTENCED FOR GUN IN CHECKED-BAGGAGE

PRESS RELEASE

Susan W. Brooks, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced that MICHAEL BALLINGER, 46, Lawrenceburg, Indiana, was sentenced to one year of probation and 250 hours of community service today by U.S. District Magistrate Judge Kennard P. Foster following his guilty plea to entering an airport in violation of security requirements. This case was the result of a investigation by the Transportation Security Administration.

BALLINGER admitted that on March 13, 2003, while attempting to fly from Indianapolis to Florida, he presented a bag to be loaded as checked baggage which contained a 9mm semi-automatic pistol. BALLINGER failed to disclose the presence of the firearm to

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screeners as required by federal airport safety regulations. The firearm was discovered during the baggage screening process.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Christina McKee, who prosecuted the case for the government, a \$500 civil penalty was also imposed on BALLINGER by the Federal Aviation Administration.

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